The Cleveland Museum of Art

Innovative and Vibrant Indian Paintings

Media Advisory
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Visual commentary on 19th century life in Calcutta opens May 1

CLEVELAND (April 27, 2011) -- Gleaned from a prized and relatively unknown group of objects in the museum's wide-ranging Asian collection, the *Indian Kalighat Paintings* exhibition will allow visitors an opportunity to view these rarely displayed Indian paintings, considered to be the beginning of modernism in Indian art.

Originally created as souvenirs for 19th century tourists, and regarded as a response to the sudden prosperity brought to Calcutta by the East India Company, the innovative and influential paintings are now highly regarded elements of museum and private collections. Motifs explored in the artwork include religious themes, Western material influence, and commentary regarding the changing social order. These highly stylized and brightly colored paintings also mock the newly affluent and depict contemporary newsworthy figures.

Guest Curator Deepak Sarma is an Associate Professor of South Asian Religions in the Department of Religious Studies at Case Western Reserve University.

Presented by the Cleveland Museum of Art, *Indian Kalighat Paintings* is the second exhibition in a year-long series, *Glimpses of Asia*, that celebrates Asian art.

WHAT: *Indian Kalighat Paintings*

WHEN: May 1–September 18, 2011

WHERE: Prints and Drawings Gallery, The Cleveland Museum of Art, 11150 East Boulevard, Cleveland

ADMISSION:
Indian Kalighat Paintings is a free exhibition.

DETAILS:
For more information about the exhibition and complementary programming, visit www.ClevelandArt.org or call 216-707-2483.

COMPLEMENTARY EXHIBITION PROGRAMMING:

Sunday, May 22, 2:00 p.m.
Indian Kalighat Paintings: A Subaltern Voice Against the Decadence of Globalization lecture given by guest curator Deepak Sarma, Associate Professor of Religious Studies, Philosophy, Classics, and Bioethics, Case Western Reserve University. Sarma presents the Kalighat artists as innovative social commentators whose paintings reflected, critiqued, and complemented globalization and its discontents. Recital Hall. Free.

Friday, July 8, 6:30 p.m.
Guest curator gallery talk. Deepak Sarma, *Indian Kalighat Paintings*. Please call 48 hours prior to reserve your spot- 216-707-2656. Prints and Drawings Gallery. Free.

Wednesday, September 7, 6:30 p.m.
Trials and Tribulations in Colonial Calcutta: Kalighat Paintings as Social Commentary lecture given by Paul B. Courtright, Professor in the Department of Religion and the Graduate Division of Religion at Emory University. Courtwright focuses on the non-religious content of several of the paintings from the exhibition to foreground the role of satire and caricature employed by the painters as they represented an urban culture undergoing rapid change. Recital Hall. Free.

About *Glimpses of Asia*:

The Cleveland Museum of Art has long been a preeminent collector and presenter of Asian art. In 2011, the museum celebrates this commitment throughout the year with exhibitions that span time, geography and cultures across Asia. The constellation of exhibitions, together titled *Glimpses of Asia*, began with *The Lure of Painted Poetry: Japanese and Korean Art*. The year concludes with a presentation of *Chinese Art in an Age of Revolution: Fu Baoshi (1904-1965)*, the first retrospective of

one of the most important Chinese artists of the last century in a collaboration between the Cleveland Museum of Art and Nanjing Museum in China.

About the Cleveland Museum of Art

The Cleveland Museum of Art is renowned for the quality and breadth of its collection, which includes more than 40,000 objects and spans 6,000 years of achievement in the arts. Currently undergoing an ambitious, multi-phase renovation and expansion project across its campus, the museum is a significant international forum for exhibitions, scholarship, performing arts and art education. One of the top five comprehensive art museums in the nation, and the only one that is free of charge to all, the Cleveland Museum of Art is located in the dynamic University Circle neighborhood.

The Cleveland Museum of Art has a membership of more than 21,500 households and is supported by a broad range of individuals, foundations and businesses in Cleveland and Northeast Ohio. The museum is generously funded by Cuyahoga County residents through Cuyahoga Arts and Culture. Additional support comes from the Ohio Arts Council, which helps fund the museum with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, educational excellence and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans. For more information about the museum, its holdings, programs and events, call 888-CMA-0033 or visit www.ClevelandArt.org.

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About the Cleveland Museum of Art

The Cleveland Museum of Art is renowned for the quality and breadth of its collection, which includes more than 63,000 artworks and spans 6,000 years of achievement in the arts. The museum is a significant international forum for exhibitions, scholarship and performing arts and is a leader in digital innovations. One of the top comprehensive art museums in the nation, recognized for its award-winning Open Access program and free of charge to all, the Cleveland Museum of Art is located in the University Circle neighborhood.

The museum is supported in part by residents of Cuyahoga County through a public grant from Cuyahoga Arts & Culture and made possible in part by the Ohio Arts Council (OAC), which receives support from the State of Ohio and the National Endowment for the Arts. The OAC is a state agency that funds and supports quality arts experiences to strengthen Ohio communities culturally, educationally and economically. For more information about the museum and its holdings, programs and events, call 888-CMA-0033 or visit cma.org [1].

Press Announcements [2]

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